

and eliminate entirely our repatriation tax to be more competitive with other countries. At the same time, we need to eliminate corporate welfare and make our tax system fairer and simpler for every American.

We also have to rein in our out-of-control regulators. This President has created the fourth branch of government—the regulators—which today makes more rules that affect our lives and our jobs than does Congress.

Finally, we need to unlock our full energy potential to get this economy moving. We need to develop our domestic natural resources. Isn't it time we finally develop a long-term energy policy that unleashes this potential while protecting our environment?

Doing these things now will also allow us to fund our infrastructure needs, improve our education process, become more competitive with the rest of the world, create well-paying, 21st-century jobs, and ignite the next economic boom for our kids and grandkids.

I have used the word "crisis" carefully and thoughtfully today. The first step toward making the tough choices required to change our direction comes from a true realization that we indeed have a crisis. Americans respond better than anyone in history to a true crisis, but we are not always the quickest to recognize we have one.

To create a truly new beginning, it is time for this eminent body, the U.S. Senate, to rise above partisan politics and do the right thing. It starts with leadership. It starts with making hard choices. It starts with telling the American people the unvarnished truth. It starts with no longer kicking the can down the road. It starts with having the courage to actually solve these problems independent of how it might affect our reelection chances.

My motivation is very simple. I do not want to be a member of the first generation in American history that has to tell its kids that we are leaving them a country that is worse off than our parents left us.

Ronald Reagan once said:

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it along to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States when men were free.

Let us fight to find common ground to create a new beginning for our country, for people back home who are struggling, and for the future of our children and our children's children.

As I close, I am reminded of a seldom-quoted closing sentence of the Declaration of Independence:

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Our Founders got it right. They would remind us of that commitment

and encourage us today to put our differences aside, to work together to solve these sometimes overwhelming problems.

Together, we can put our differences aside. Together, we can do the right thing. Together, we can create a new beginning.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR PERDUE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate our new colleague from Georgia on his insightful and accurate assessment of the biggest challenges confronting our country. Not only did he lay out the biggest challenges, he certainly laid out the best solutions to those challenges to get this country moving again and to guarantee, as he put it, that we leave behind for the next generation a better country than our parents left behind for us.

I congratulate our new colleague for an outstanding major speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am grateful that we have the distinguished Senator from Georgia in the Senate. I really enjoyed his remarks here this evening. He laid out a program that we ought to follow.

I am very proud to have the Senator here, and I am proud to serve with him. We wish him the very, very best in every way. I think he will enjoy this body in spite of all the vagaries and varieties of it. But he is a great addition to this body, and we are very appreciative that he is here with us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to note that my colleague from Georgia just made a great speech. In it he listed those who sat in the desk he now sits in—Nunn, Russell, Chambliss. It is obvious he has inherited that seat, and he is equal to the task of those gentlemen. I commend him on his first speech, and I am honored to serve with him in the Senate.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to say, I knew the Senator from Georgia prior to being a Senator. He was an outstanding CEO in a major public company. He has done business all over the world. I know when he campaigned in Georgia for this seat, what he said was that he was going to be the adult in the room. I just want to say that he certainly has distinguished himself since he came here in acting that way and looking at the big issues that our Nation has to deal with.

I know that he knows that still the greatest threat to our country right now is our inability to get our fiscal

house in order, and I really believe that Senator PERDUE is going to not just be a leader on the Foreign Relations Committee, as he already is—hugely helpful in the vote that we had last week relative to Iran—but I think as much as anybody in the Senate, Senator PERDUE is going to help drive this body to responsibly deal with fiscal issues we have to deal with.

We have a lot of work to do. We haven't even begun. I look forward to working with him, not only to ensure that our Nation is safe and secure but that we get our fiscal house in order. I could not be more gratified that Senator PERDUE is part of this body and serving in the manner that he is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Senator from Georgia on the content of his speech as well as on his enthusiasm and also on how he follows through on what he says. I get to serve with him on the Budget Committee, and I have been extremely impressed.

At his first meeting, I introduced him as someone who has balanced budgets. He corrected me. In the private sector, one can't just balance the budget; you have to do better than that. He has that kind of experience to bring to the Budget Committee and to this body, and I look forward to working with him diligently on the budget. We only had 6 weeks to do what hadn't been done in 6 years, and he was a tremendous help in getting through that process and understanding some of the complexities. He is a good numbers man. So when he talks about what we need to do with the budget and paying down the debt and the ways we can do it, I look forward to working with him to get those things accomplished.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I wish to commend my fellow freshman, Senator PERDUE, for a great maiden speech. I like particularly his emphasis upon growing our gross domestic product, growing our economy, and making it stronger. It echoes what Senator ENZI just said. It is not just about balancing the budget but about creating the sort of growth that creates more prosperity for the families who depend upon this prosperity for better jobs for them and their families.

It was a great speech. I thank the Senator for capturing the optimism that makes the United States unique.

I yield back.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING DR. DAVID RANKIN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Southern Arkansas University president Dr. David Rankin who will retire in June after nearly half a century of dedication to education.